

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claim 1. (Previously Presented) A method for scanning articles each labeled with a label comprising a light polarizing material, the light polarizing material forming a machine readable indicia including a code associated with the article, the light polarizing material being applied over a reflective material, comprising the steps of:

exposing the light polarizing material to a light source;

dividing light reflected from the indicia into a plurality of beams;

filtering each of a plurality of the beams through a polarized filter, each of the filters being offset from each of the other filters by a predetermined angle;

generating an electronic image from each of the filtered beams with a detector;

comparing the electronic images to produce a composite image corresponding to the machine readable indicia; and

electronically analyzing the composite image to decode the indicia.

Claim 2. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1 wherein a database including a plurality of codes was used to apply different machine readable indicia to different ones of the plurality of articles, the machine readable indicia representing one of the plurality of codes associated with particular articles.

Claim 3. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1 wherein the machine readable indicia are formed on a plurality of labels from a light polarizing material applied over the reflective material, the reflective material reflecting light through the light polarizing material.

Claims 4-6. (Canceled)

Claim 7. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1 further comprising generating the electronic image from each of the filtered beams with a charge coupled array.

Claim 8. (Canceled).

Claim 9. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 2 wherein the machine readable indicia comprises a bar code.

Claim 10. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein the light polarizing material and the reflective material are transparent to visible light.

Claims 11-24. (Canceled).

Claim 25. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1 wherein the step of comparing the images comprises subtracting a first digitalized image from a second digitalized image to obtain a difference representing the machine readable indicia.

Claim 26. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1 wherein the machine readable indicia comprise postal address information and the articles comprise mail pieces.

Claim 27. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1 wherein the label is at least partially transparent, and the reflective material comprises a surface of a labeled article.

Claims 28-33. (Canceled).